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Match-up...

The eyes show the unflinching concentration that Chad Reed needed to beat Ken Roczen in Anaheim last Saturday. The German launches out of the short sandy section with accomplishment of a rider with many past hours of practice at Lommel. Reed himself is no slouch in the soft stuff and grasped his sole GP win in the Dutch terrain of Lierop in 2001

Photo by Ray Archer



AMA-SX





Remembered again...

Former 250cc world champion and still missed from the ranks of MotoGP Marco Simoncelli is to be posthumously entered in the sport's Hall of Fame come Mugello this summer. He will be the 21st racer inscribed in the list and joins Agostini, Doohan, Duke, Gardner, Hailwood, Kato, Lawson, Mang, Nieto, Rainey, Read, Redman, Roberts, Saarinen, Schwantz, Sheene, Spencer, Surtees, Stoner and Ubbiali

Photo by Honda Pro Images/Northcott



MotoGP





MX

Messy...

Rockstar Energy Suzuki Europe's Glenn Coldenhoff showed off his new factory colours in Spain last week and www.mx1onboard.com's Juan Pablo Acevedo was there to capture the Dutchman's speed on the RM-Z250. 'The Hoff' turns yellow for the first time in his MX2 GP career in 2014

Photo by Juan Pablo Acevedo





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AMA-SX

LOS ANGELES

ANAHEIM 3 · FEBRUARY 1st · Rnd 5 of 17

450SX winner: Chad Reed, Kawasaki

250SX West Coast winner: Dean Wilson, Kawasaki



PLAY

ANAHEIM OWNED

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Ray Archer





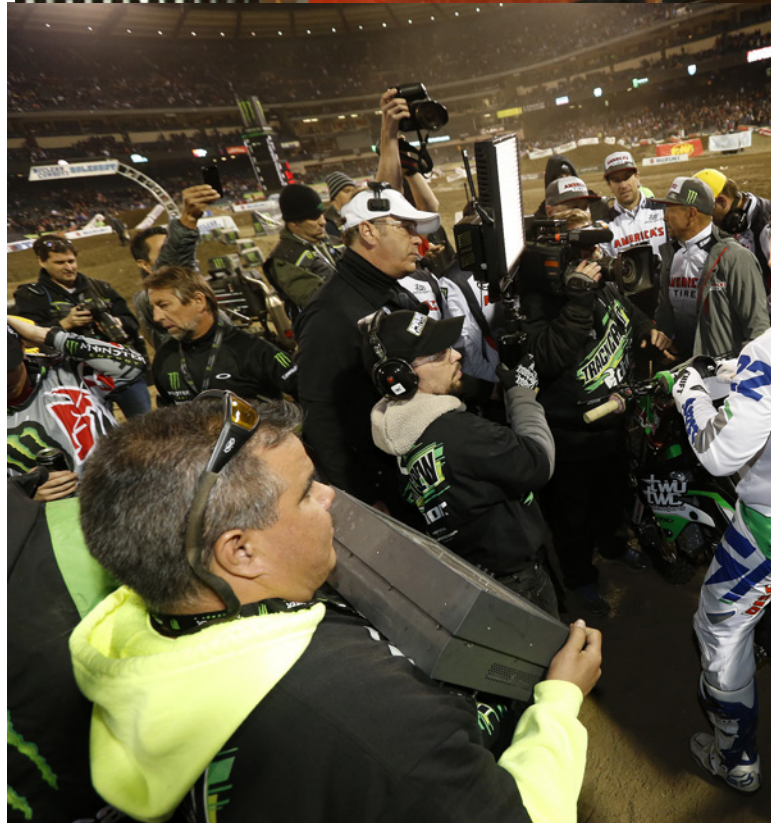
Win number eight at Anaheim for
Chad Reed in a spell of victory
that covers eleven years...

Chad Reed is in a strange phase of his career. At the third and final stop of the 2014 Anaheim schedule – and the Angel Stadium was still pretty busy for yet another visit in the space of five weeks – the Australian was chased down by a rider ten years younger and by a reigning champion with three straight 450SX titles. Reed made an early pass on Ryan Villopoto and then did not buckle or budge. He claimed victory in the ‘Anaheim dice’ with A1 winner Ken Roczen, despite some sustained late pressure in the main event, and continues to raise eyebrows and garner the cheers of the crowd as one of the more popular figures on the track.

Reed set a steady pace at the front, that flowing style eeking out lap-times between 1.03-1.04 for a long circulation of a course that was two beasts; a fast and open dash between the first corner and the sixth, and then into some tricky whoops and around to the timing sections where little or no significant passing took place. Reed used his experience to sense a potential second win of the season and an eighth at Anaheim; the first of all his 450SX class triumphs beginning at the venue eleven years previously. In the second half of the race his times dropped out of the 1.03s and into the 1.04s just twice compared to Villopoto in third place who started to hit the 1.05s and 1.06s in the last five laps. The champion would claim that the track had been “incredibly tough” and he was happy to finish the evening with a rostrum finish, although the no.1 looked anything but content shrouded in his Kawasaki jacket and with an expression that more testing mileage at the Kawasaki facility will be necessary this week.

Roczen kept close to Reed and the Main Event was building into a promising finale when the leaders ran into Jimmy Albertson who was recovering his Honda. The former GP rider had won a superb Semi Final earlier in the night but unwittingly and unwillingly interrupted the duel for the lead, with Reed cutting through the traffic in the closing stages and Roczen denied a last-gasp attack.

Reed’s 26th career podium result at Anaheim and his third this year (completing a nice set of trophies) edges him to within two points of Villopoto at the top of the standings. The 31 year old has always brought a degree of class to the supercross field but





A spill in the whoops robbed Dungey of most of his left handlebar. No.5 tried to engage neutral and restart but was forced out with this level of damage



Not a great start for Jason Anderson (17) and his typical fast charge would find a breaking point with Malcolm Stewart (34)...



there are not many who would have predicted this reversal of form from a miserly return in 2013 and when so many capable riders are angling for the spotlight. From his talk by the podium afterwards Reed is clearly taking the acclaim and performance levels in his stride and seems to quite enjoy his role as the unlikely usurper; an anomaly outside of the 'robots' training 24-7 as he called them. Perhaps his German rival could be considered in that category but Roczen did everything right and very little wrong at a happy hunting ground for the soon-to-be 21 year old.

What else stood out from this fifth round? Clearly the misadventures of Ryan Dungey continue as the KTM rider seems in a transition period of varying his normally placid race approach. The '5' was again a rapid and aggressive figure, made all the more twitchy by his mediocre start. James Stewart could still be fuming right now after being punted off the track by the former champion and out of fourth position (Stewart himself was not looking so sharp and unlikely to mount a charge on the top three even though the matter was settled by Dungey on lap 12 of 20).



Dungey later got out of shape through the whoops and the resulting tumble mashed his handlebars, snapped his clutch and he spent more than a lap trying to get the bike in neutral and restarted to be able to continue. The DNF already puts him 28 points down on the

other Ryan. Justin Barcia captured a fourth place but won't take too much consolation in the fact that it was his best result of the season so far. Honda brand-mate Eli Tomac returned to the fold after his recent arm injury but a flat tyre ended his night at mid-race distance. A worth mention to Weston Peick who posted a career-best with fifth place and scalped factory riders like Justin Brayton and Jake Weimer.

The 250SX division looked like a foregone conclusion from the moment the gates opened. Dean Wilson was fit and healthy to the point that he was looking loose, attacking and extremely confident. His margin of victory in the Heat race was absurd; he ghosted the pack by something like two seconds a lap. That 250 field was weakened by the absence of Geico Honda's Zach Osborne who crashed and suffered a possible collarbone crack.

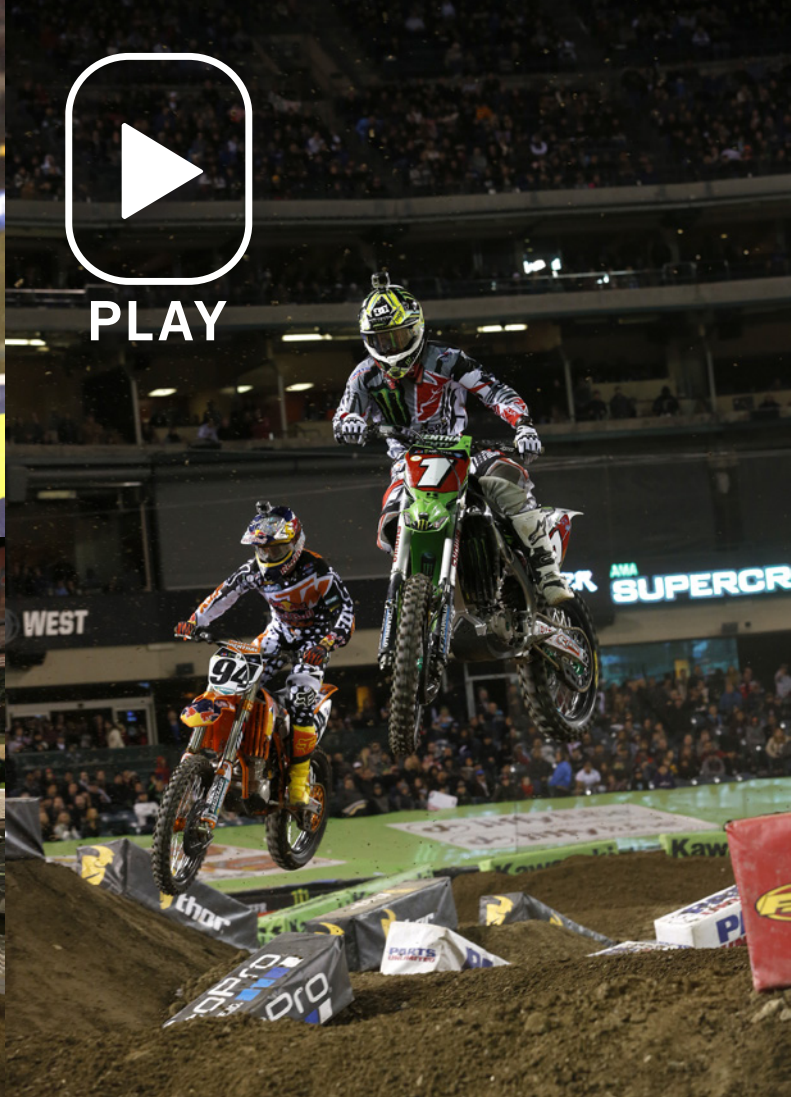
Wilson's air of inevitability was not so pungent in the Main Event when Cole Seely seized on his holeshot and set a pace that took him clear by at least two seconds. The TLD Honda rider ended up gifting the race to the closing Monster Energy Pro Circuit racer when he lost the front end in the switchback out of the whoops. With Seely recovering and being joined by the lively Cooper Webb on the podium the next focus of attention was the discussion between series leader Jason Anderson and Malcolm Stewart as the bikes rolled off towards the paddock. Anderson had been hit to the floor by the Honda man mid-way through the sprint as they closed on the leaders. Stewart's body language seemed to indicate that the incident was similar in tone and feeling to the close pass Anderson had made on him in the previous corner. In any regard the clash ended Anderson's ritual late charge towards the rostrum and the points difference brings Seely level at the top of the standings with Wilson also catching up.

On a cold and breezy night AMA Supercross signed off from its staple Californian stint and with San Diego in store this coming weekend the series braces itself for the last stop on the west coast.

Fourth place was not a bad run for Barcia but his start(s) continue to banish him from serious podium contention









A great first victory for Wilson (top left) came at the expense of the impressive but hasty Cole Seely (21). Wilson was clearly emotional post-race after a horrible eighteen months with injury. Roczen looks thoughtful (this page) but the German continues to be a shining beacon in 450SX



Not much for Jake Weimer to be cheerful about so far and the factory Kawasaki rider took the long route through the re-installed Semi-Final qualification system. The former Lites champ requires a podium finish for some needed confidence







Goodbye Anaheim (right) but hello
Weston Peick with a noteworthy
fifth place in the A3 Main





AMA-SX CLASSIFICATION & CHAMPIONSHIP

AMA 450SX RESULT

Riders

1	Chad Reed, AUS	Kawasaki
2	Ken Roczen, GER	KTM
3	Ryan Villopoto, USA	Kawasaki
4	Justin Barcia, USA	Honda
5	Weston Peick, USA	Suzuki

AMA 250SX WEST RESULT

Riders

1	Dean Wilson, GBR	Kawasaki
2	Cole Seely, USA	Honda
3	Cooper Webb, USA	Yamaha
4	Justin Hill, USA	Kawasaki
5	Jason Anderson, USA	KTM

AMA 450SX STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Ryan Villopoto	104
2 Chad Reed	102
3 Ken Roczen	97
4 Justin Brayton	86
5 James Stewart	80

AMA 250SX WEST STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 9 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Jason Anderson	109
2 Cole Seely	109
3 Dean Wilson	97
4 Cooper Webb	85
5 Justin Hill	82

OLD BOYS GATHERING...

By Steve Matthes

Coming into the season many assumed that Chad Reed's winning ways were a thing of the past. The Aussie veteran was on his fourth bike brand of his career and on the wrong side of 30. The 2014 season was supposed to be about getting a few podiums and redemption from a miserable 2013. Well, with his second win this past Saturday night, Reed's now a legitimate threat for the title as he sits in second only two points behind quasi-teammate Ryan Villopoto.

I caught up to Reed while he was still in his gear, taking photos with kids and signing anything and everything to get his take on the night.

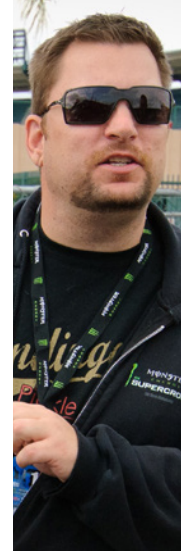
What a story you're authoring here. You had the hardest job of all because of that pressure for the entire 20 laps and that's a tough deal to hold mentally strong for that long...

Like you said, it was. I made a few mistakes there but nothing too costly. The whoops were gnarly. Honestly all 20 laps I sent it in there pretty nervous. I had to. Kenny was strong in the whoops. I basically tried to react to it as quick as I could. So I think I was solid in them but I didn't really feel as awesome as what I normally do in the whoops all day. We just made a lot of super small changes to the bike for the main event. I was pretty nervous just because the changes we had, we haven't really made on this bike before. Honestly what we ended the off-season with is what we've been going racing with. We raced with a rear tyre that I

hadn't used on this bike before, we did some air pressure changes to the fork that we haven't done before. So kind of went into the main event really not knowing what I was going to get. And immediately as soon as I got out front the bike felt good and I just tried to be solid.

For you that's a big deal. You're a guy making a lot of changes during the day and to do something in the main event without knowing it, a little sketched out, but you hit it right...

Like you said, normally we can make some big changes. It wasn't abnormal for us to be changing clamps and linkages and shock settings and all that, and we haven't done any of that this year. So to just make small changes, and when I say 'changes' I mean super, super small things. But this bike's pretty responsive so you never knew what it was going to do. You put faith in these guys. That's what you pay them for. They're the best in the pits. Like Stewart, I watched the heat race on TV and Stew said it's not going to be about the fastest guy, it's going to be about the dude that rides smart and sets his bike up good. And that kind of gave me confidence because I felt that out of all the people around here I think that myself and the team are solid at setting up a good bike.



You've gone on the record that your fitness wasn't the greatest last year but now look who was pulling away from RV. Everyone else was kind of making mistakes, maybe some of it due to fitness, and you and Kenny were right there at the end...

Yeah, my fitness is fine. We had a solid week this week. I only rode once because we got rained out in Florida. Luckily that day we kind of set it pretty good. Like you said, I admitted last year I was horrible and we wanted to change that this year.

No quad jump for you either...

I never quadded. JT busted my balls all day and told me it was easy and this guy's doing it, that guy's doing it. But for whatever reason it just didn't feel like it was the line. The line that I took, I think it was double-triple-double, and I never really did that line all day. I was like triple-triple-single. For the most part I felt really good, solid on the track. Whoops were tough. Not a bad track. I have to agree that the track wasn't horrible but it was definitely not my favorite.

You've got an incredible amount of people out here loving what you're doing. We talked about your first win and here we are two races later and you got another win. This is the start of a real cool story...

Yeah, it's a cool story, but for me I want the cool story 'ending'. I want to win a title. That's why we're here. I want to grind away and try to take

that red plate to Vegas and win this thing. RV's been super strong the last three years. So we'll try to find something that no one else has been able to do the last three years and try to take it to him. For us I think it's about winning races. When you look at anybody's championship year, even mine included, you've won multiple times. We've won two times and all we can try to do is get a 3rd and try to get a back-to-back. I haven't had a back-to-back win since '09 so that would be nice. We're going to a stadium that I haven't done too badly over the years. We'll see what happens.

Was it a conscious decision to get by RV right away?

No, that was not the plan. Plan was to tuck in the draft and go with him. RV lays it down. He's got good creative lines.

Did he make a mistake or something to make you go for it?

No, I sent it in pretty good in the whoops and he didn't get a good run. I just found myself in a position to pass and I took it and kind of just tried to ride my race and he wasn't coming back around. Kenny was the guy pushing. So a little bit surprised by that but no discredit. I think sometimes the tracks work for you, sometimes they don't. Last week he was a solid dude. He rode away from me. When we're on good tracks and tracks that suit him we just need to make the gap.



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THE TARGET CAIROLI ON 2014

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Ray Archer

Five years of almost unrivalled supremacy in the premier class of the FIM Motocross World Championship means that Red Bull KTM's Tony Cairoli is the moving target for six other brands and over twenty riders come the opening round of the 2014 campaign in four

weeks. OTOR called the 28 year old Sicilian, chasing an eighth crown and only three titles away from Stefan Everts supposedly 'uncatchable' haul of ten, to chat a few of the topics on his plate as his twelfth Grand Prix term draws near...

On the difference of running 30 minutes motos from this year...

I don't think it will make much difference. We will see when the season starts and how the races turn out. It might mean having a slightly different approach but I cannot imagine [that]. I'll go into the motos like I have always done and then will see if I have to change anything over the first few rounds.

On mixing up his winter programme and finding improvements (!)...

Overall we've used the same schedule. When something has worked well for a few years then it is only normal not to go off in another direction. However I have made some little changes and it involves gym work. Not so much with weights but various exercises to build up a bit more bulk. I want to be able to have more resistance to the chance of injury and the problems you can pick up through a season. That was one thing I could improve. It's been pretty busy and every winter there seems to be something more, and added attention from the media; which is great. It goes to show the work we are doing is paying off. To win that sportsman of the year award [an accolade voted for by the public and viewers of Sky Sports, one of the top sport channels in Italy] was so good. It was a big win for motocross.

On tweaks to the KTM 350SX-F that he has largely preserved since 2010...

We've tested some small parts that have made a difference but to be honest I really like the 350cc engine so the only modifications have been to the suspension. The 350 makes exactly the kind of power that I like and want, so there is no pressure to find more. We are still looking at some new things for the suspension and also the air shock; I'm still undecided

about this. I like it in some conditions but not in others. Perhaps not yet for Grand Prix but we're making tests and there is some more work to come.

On who might present some surprises this year...

For sure Tyla [Rattray] is a very good rider and will have a very good bike! He will have possibilities to be there in the top five. I think [Jeremy] Van Horebeek could be stronger than last year. He might be a surprise. Otherwise it will be the same guys like Paulin, Desalle and my team-mate who will be there. I hope he [Ken De Dycker] will soon be back in good shape.

On building up to the first GP...

There is not too much pressure with the Italian Championship and the results can only mean so much by the time you go to the first Grand Prix. I have been in this situation and through pre-season for many years now so I have the experience to build up to that first GP and really make sure I am ready for Qatar.

On the potential standout event for him this year...

Maggiora [Italian Grand Prix] is a big race, as we saw this year with a lot of people. From what I am hearing already then many are already looking forward to it and I believe it will be even bigger this summer. I like racing in Italy and in front of the fans. It has extra pressure but it is so nice. The one thing I didn't like was being on the second step at Maggiora, so that is something to fix this time. I also like the sand a lot. Valkenswaard will be good. Those three overseas GPs to start the season [Qatar, Thailand and Brazil] should be a lot of fun and I am hoping for a good year.





CAIROLI FACT FILE

Grand Prix teams raced for: 2 (Martin Honda in 2003, De Carli Yamaha/KTM from 2004 onwards)

Brands represented: 3 (Honda in 2003, Yamaha from 2004 to 2009, KTM from 2010)

Grand Prix seasons raced: 12

Top five championship finishes: 10

World titles: 7

Grand Prix wins: 63

Moto wins: 129

Position on MX1 debut race: 1st (2007 British Grand Prix, Donington Park)

Worst year: 2008 finished 6th in MX2 series but missed half season with knee ligament injury

Best year: 2012 won 11 from 16 MX1 Grands Prix

Motorcycles raced: Honda CRF205R, Yamaha YZ250F, Yamaha YZ450F, KTM 350SX-F

Nations fact: Unbeaten in the last four MX1 motos across 2012 and 2013



A child is shown from the waist up, wearing a full Leatt motocross kit. The kit includes a white helmet with a black visor, a grey long-sleeved jersey, a bright yellow-green chest protector with the Leatt logo, black knee pads, and black boots. The child's arms are raised in a 'V' shape, and they are standing on a grey rectangular podium. The background is a dark, out-of-focus green field.

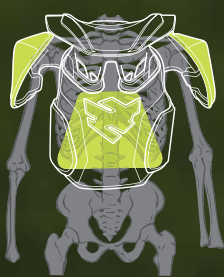
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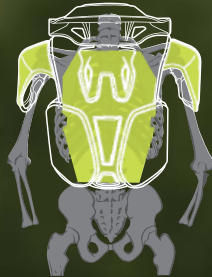


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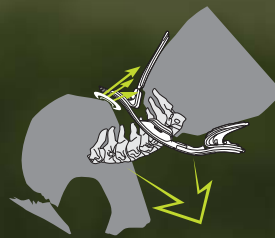
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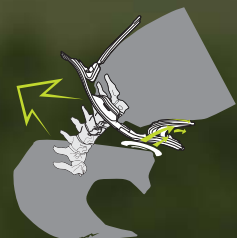
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DIFFERENT APPROACH...

By Adam Wheeler

How hard is supercross? I have no idea but it looks knackered, knife-edge dangerous, almost ludicrous when you contemplate the track layout and what the riders do and the punishment the bikes take.

How hard is it to deal with a supercross racer? Ah, there I can offer a bit more insight. The answer is: pretty difficult.

Perhaps I'm speaking from a position of luxury and a relatively comfy bed in Grand Prix where the riding fraternity is almost universally laid-back and the nearest a rider will come to a tizz is at their home event (saying that, even Evgeny Bobryshev was his usual humble and friendly self despite crazy levels of adoration at Semagorje two years ago. The Russian was almost boss-eyed through the amount of attention he had to deal with and the crowd numbers that day was one of the bigger surprises I've seen in fourteen years of GP reporting).

I'm not approaching the likes of Villopoto, Dungey, Stewart and Barcia as a rookie journalist – I've interviewed them all at some point – but as a foreigner and someone that is not generating copy for a U.S. publication (that in turn might have the slightest ramification for awareness of the brands connected with these athletes in their sole market of importance) their time with me is hardly essential. This is not a slight against any of the AMA competitors or the PR crews that surround the teams but my arrival in the USA for a brief two-round dalliance with supercross never fails to make me realise how big and demanding dirt-bike racing can actually be. These guys have to condense in a lot of duties

over the course of a 36 hour period around a race; from press conferences to dealer events, sponsor obligations and fans meet-and-greets. It is not really a surprise that the press have to hunch their shoulders and try to squeeze in somewhere among the timetable. AMA events last one day. It is almost impossible to satisfy the needs of regular specialist media, Fox TV, local press, possible national coverage...and then worry about the foreign elements that drift across the Atlantic or travel up from the southern hemisphere for their annual reportage.

I've heard Grand Prix riders complain about 'the sitting around' that they might endure across two nights and two days at every meeting but the truth is that the space afforded by a weekend lets the many elements involved in world championship racing - TV, press, sponsors, brands, fans - get their slice as well. The more alert and savvy of those riders might actually be seeking out opportunities to gain points in terms of exposure for themselves and backers if their first practice session has gone like a dream and the fixture is already starting to drag.

At Supercross it works in reverse and it seems like every works racer or high profile athlete has a handler dictating their time and place to them. There are several more layers to work through over here; PR, team staff, a trainer or coach and then spouses or family. There is more money, time, energy and spotlight on these guys and that creates a more rigid pecking order. They don't have my empathy; they have worked too hard and have too much talent and bravery to glean pity for other elements of their chosen profession but there is a level of understanding.



LET'S WATCH

HOW MXGP CAME BACK TO EUROSPORT

By Adam Wheeler, photos by M.Zanzani/Youthstream

The FIM Motocross World Championship returns to a significant television stage and live broadcasts for the first time this decade with the recently inked three year deal with Eurosport that is a major boost for the exposure of the MX in Europe and also through the network's reach into Asia. Motocross now forms part of the blanket coverage of diverse sports available on the channel(s) with

healthy air-time; it seems a decent amount of the eighteen rounds will have the second motos broadcast live and the 26 minute highlight show will also pop up every Tuesday after a Grand Prix. OTOR acquired some words from both Eurosport and Youthstream in the wake of the announcement to highlight why this is buoyant news for MXGP fans and those relishing the textures of the action in HD...



Switched into life in 1989 Eurosport celebrates a quarter of a century in 2014 and through that period has flowered into many people's easily accessible font for unceasing live coverage of sport...even some of the lesser known activities. Eurosport claims to screen 5000 live hours of some 120 sports a year. It's growth through French and American parent companies TFI and Discovery Communications means that the principal channel reaches over 130 million homes in 54 countries and is transmitted in 20 different languages. The supplement channel, Eurosport 2, holds up numbers of 66 million homes in 51 countries. The Asia Pacific route stretches to 17 nations in that region.

Understandably it is a massive window for motocross and one that will be eagerly grasped in terms of gaining valuable eyeballs. A key factor is the channel's HD platform, which will provide an added dimension to a motorsport that has not always 'shone' through a glass screen. HD was only really enjoyed through the MXlife.tv (now mxgp.tv) internet output in 2013 as the principal pan-European outlet for live broadcast, Motors TV, was archaically standard.

Motocross was last shown in a delayed capacity on Eurosport in 2010, until highlights packages were picked up in 2013 in a forerunner to the current deal. Youthstream's push to present the sport in an adventurous and dynamic way in 2013 evidently paid off. I'm still haunted by the scary sight of a RF cameraman strapped to the back of a quad barrelling up and down parallel to the track at the Lausitzring for the German Grand Prix; the TV images however were quite striking as the camera sped alongside Cairoli, Desalle et al through the rhythm section. It was ad-hoc techniques like these, agreements with GoPro and the increasing presence of a drone camera that Youthstream President Giuseppe Luongo believes helped raise the profile of their TV effort and open the door.

"The credibility, value and visibility of MXGP has risen a lot over the last years, and this together with our investment in the production (not only for the HD but also based on many aspects like the on-board cameras, the quadcam, drone, mini-cams, the cable-cam and the important work made in 2013 on the social media and the MXGP's promotion in general) increased the interest of many important TV broadcasters," he says. "We have been working on this for a long time, and we believe in the enormous potential of MXGP because it's an outstanding show that is very well presented and it's a true sport - we must not forget it's the only motorsport where the man is still more important than the machine."

For Eurosport the acquisition of the FIM Motocross World Championship is merely an extension to their motorcycling sport cannon. Perhaps a reaction to their loss of MotoGP but an asset to an already ample catalogue, as Content Director Arnaud Simon admits: "The new



MXGP & EUROSPORT



agreement is part of Eurosport's ambition to reinforce its global motor sports offer. It will satisfy fans of off-road racing and will help to balance our offer of circuit competitions such as FIM World Superbike and British Superbike Championships."

The programme itself will follow Youthstream's template of location intro, first moto highlights and then full relay of the second race live with English commentary coming from knowledgeable former ex-GP winner Paul Malin for the international feed. "Eurosport will take the signal directly from Youthstream and broadcast in HD all over Europe," Luongo affirms. "There will not be any special features for them but the Eurosport audience will have access to MXGP and MX2 races live all season."

The speed, demands and thrills of Grand Prix is not something that has always come across on television but Eurosport has spotted the potential: "Motocross is visually spectacular and fits well alongside other extreme sports series broadcast on Eurosport," asserts Simon. "On this occasion Eurosport is not producing the content for the MXGP, and is only the TV broadcaster. Therefore it is for the host broadcaster to capture for us all the excitement of the sport. The HD standard of production for MXGP is consistent with other sporting events Eurosport shows."

The onus is now on Youthstream to take some of the interesting angles discovered and amplified in 2013 and enhance the programming even further. The presence of a new TV Director, John Nicols, will be a curious test after several years with Italian Giorgio Faraldi at the helm. Luongo justifies the employment change: "All companies need fresh blood to be introduced from time to time offering new innovative ideas and providing more motivation. More new and young fans need to be attracted to MXGP and we see that in 2013 this is possible thanks to the social network, therefore it's necessary to present our sport on TV in a more dynamic, modern and captivating way."

"20 cameras will be filming the races; the show will be outstanding."

So how much motocross will we see on a live basis? Seven of the current MXGP dates (Trentino, Spain, Britain, Germany, Sweden, Finland and Brazil) clash with races in the fourteen round World Superbike series. "Eurosport will aim to broadcast Motocross live as much as possible, we are a live sport channel," says Simon. "However there is always a balance to find in Eurosport and Eurosport 2's schedules with other live events and the sporting calendar more widely, so editorial choices will have to be made," he adds ominously. Luongo – naturally – is more upbeat and confident despite 2014 welcoming the 20th edition of FIFA World Cup from 12th June to 13th July. "Concerning Eurosport the goal is to broadcast live all MXGP and MX2 events and the MXoN but as it's a long term agreement the schedule is difficult to affirm now, it could be possible that for a few special occasions if MXGP is held at the same time as another important event (like Olympic Games or the Football World Cup) to be slightly delayed, but we have the guarantee that all the Grand Prix events will be broadcasted and the large majority live."

Keeping tabs on the TV guide as well as the official website (due for an excellent revision in the coming months) will be key to not missing out. Luongo: "For all MXGP broadcasting schedules Youthstream Media will inform everyone the week before every MXGP event about all the live and delayed transmissions of the MXGP concerned."

For 2014, '15 and '16 MXGP will entertain fans and gain new ones simply via a flick through a satellite or freeview remote on any given Sunday or weekday. In the UK alone it is estimated that almost seven million homes have Freeview and Sky. What might happen after 2016 depends on the show Cairoli and Herlings and





cohorts are creating and if that extra audience arrives as a result. “Eurosport has agreed to a relatively long term partnership to enable Motocross to grow on its channels in terms of popularity and audiences,” confirms Simon. “We will look at a number of factors, including audience ratings, before making any future commitments as we would with any other sports.”

Eurosport is not new ground for MXGP but it is a step back onto a necessary launching pad. Circumstances have arisen and sands have shifted to enable the link-up, and means that Youthstream have extra momentum to push the sport up a footing. Their alignment with Al Jazeera in 2013 was another hefty manoeuvre for the status of motocross in that section of the world and Eurosport packs quite a punch when it comes to the EU. Luongo underlines the importance of the deal: “The agreement with Eurosport is not the only new important

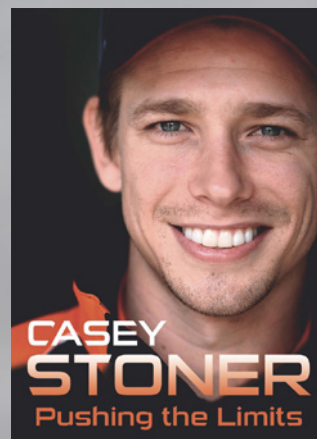
broadcaster agreement recently finalized and Youthstream will be announcing other two very important agreements which will bring the TV coverage of the 2014 MXGP World Championship very close to many other major sports in the world; this will help us continue with our plan of developing MXGP worldwide and give credibility and value providing teams, riders and everyone involved in MXGP with much better tools to find new sponsors and partners in Europe and also in many other big and growing markets around the world.”





**BOOK
ENDED**

CASEY STONER 'PUSHING THE LIMITS'



By Adam Wheeler, photos by Honda Proimages/Northcott

CASEY STONER CAPS HIS MotoGP CAREER WITH HRC TEST OUTINGS AND A BRAND NEW BOOK, 'PUSHING THE LIMITS'. HERE'S OUR TAKE ON THE PUBLICATION AND SOME EXCLUSIVE WORDS WITH CO-AUTHOR MATTHEW ROBERTS...

Casey Stoner's book is probably one of the more eagerly awaited tomes to arrive out of the Grand Prix paddock. After all the Australian was not shy to express an opinion, had one of the fiercest and most irrepressible styles and speeds in the modern era of MotoGP and in the eyes of many retired prematurely from the sport after seeming to fall out of love with it quite suddenly. The later phases of his eleven year career in GP from his emphatic and unparalleled success with Ducati, the subsequent split, spats with Valentino Rossi (on two occasions) and dominance with Honda would be enough for a book alone but the first half of this tale, ghost-written by OTOR's very own Matthew Roberts, is a fascinating study of parental determination and utter obsession and perfection by a young boy enamoured with dirt-track and the constant search to better himself.

'Pushing the Limit' is not an original title but it seems apt and befitting Stoner's story. In other words a motorsport athlete who was backed irrevocably by his family – constantly moving across Australia throughout his youth in the interests of his competitive development – and who won hundreds and hundreds of dirt-track races until he was literally forced to Europe to progress on the asphalt by Aussie race authorities. Who lived on the breadline, home schooled and thanks to the goodwill of some loyal backers and believers (that are name-checked throughout the book) and finally through his strive for improvement in Grand Prix. Dissection of his phenomenal ability to gain an immediate feel for a track and conditions compliment the many recollections of crashes, some described in painful glory.

As you might expect from an autobiography there are a few indiscrepancies with perspective. Stoner talks about his dream of becoming 500cc World Champion but the fascinating detail of his years growing up on the dirt morph into Grand Prix quite quickly and we never

grasp how he feels performing on immense stages like Mugello, Assen and Jerez. We don't get a sense for the sights, sounds, adulation and glamour of being a Grand Prix rider, but considering Casey's self-confessed aversion to the spotlight, maybe that is the point.

Again, unsurprisingly for the private person that he is, Stoner does not reveal too much of life away from the racing. He does talk freely about wife Adriana and his descriptions of moment with baby daughter Alessandra are heartfelt. There are several pages set aside for his fondness for fishing but not much reflection of what he did away from the bike and how he trained and prepared for a Grand Prix, for example he suddenly moves from Monaco to Switzerland in between accounts of his seasons.

Towards the end Stoner provides a cocktail of reasons why he retired; disillusionment with the changing regulations of the premier class and even the fall-out from Marco Simoncelli's death among them. His ruminations do something to explain the surprising departure from the top flight but he does not touch on his testing role for HRC and endless rumours that surround him in this first edition.

Overall, in one way this is an inside line on some of the most memorable MotoGP events since 2006 and one of the best riders road racing has seen but in another it is not the exposé of 'the life of a Grand Prix racer' that some might have craved and which there is precious little on the bookshelves.

Anybody curious as to how a person can become as good and skilled as Stoner will find this book a riveting case study. Others will enjoy the alternative look at MotoGP through the eyes of somebody that took the sweet with the sour and had a singular look on the sport.

To uncover a bit more into how 'Pushing the Limits' came to be we put Matt on the spot and here's what he had to say...



CASEY STONER 'PUSHING THE LIMITS'

Dr Martin Raines

What were your first memories of meeting Casey? What were your impressions of him and how did those change over the years and through his MotoGP career?

I remember meeting Casey for the first time in a supermarket cafe across the road from the Dorna offices where Adam, Gav and I used to always go for lunch. He was there with his dad Colin and a guy called Toni Calvo, who was running the Telefonica Movistar youth project for Dorna, along with Alberto Puig, at the time. Toni introduced us and later told me the kid was "la bomba" (the bomb). He was right! I remember looking out of the office window later and marvelling that potentially the next big star of motorcycle racing was driving around Spain in a battered old Citroen BX. That same vehicle was later given to me by Colin as payment for a favour and became the first car I ever owned! Casey was just a lovely kid, very open, friendly and funny. To me he has never changed from that.

Any clear or memorable instances when you clearly saw and could enjoy his superb feeling and control of a motorcycle?

Ha! The beauty of watching Stoner was that he never looked in control, although clearly he was. He was always so on the limit, right from the first practice session, and that's what struck me. During the early days he would post some ridiculous lap times in certain sessions over the course of a weekend, and even though he might not come away with a podium or a win to show for it at the end he always seemed to me like the guy with the most potential if somebody could just give him the support and opportunity he needed. It's easy to say that now in hindsight but I was always a big fan.



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FEATURE



PLAY

Stoner obviously has a clear view of the PR, media and adulation side of being a Pro sportsman. How did you see him dealing with this through MotoGP?

At times he possibly didn't deal with it very well but you can't criticise him for that, it's just the way he was. Some people crave fame, in fact modern culture in general dictates that many of us can't relate to somebody who would not encourage that kind of attention. But he had a very different upbringing to anybody else - he didn't understand the adulation or attention and he certainly didn't want it.

Were there any moments when you thought Casey would walk away from the sport before he actually did? There seem to be a couple of flashpoints in the book...

He talked about it a lot but I never really thought he would do it and I was even a little surprised when he did. I remember talking to him on pit wall at Valencia at the end of 2004, in his first test on the 250cc Aprilia he'd be riding in 2005. I expected him to be really excited but he started talking about jacking it all in, that he wasn't happy. He had a lot going on personally around that time, which is all in the book, and it must have been a hard period for him. People don't see that and don't care about it either. They think, "he's living the dream, riding in Grand Prix at nineteen years of age, what's his problem?" But life is not that straightforward is it?

How did you get involved with the book? What work did it entail?

I suggested it to Colin at Jerez in 2012 and he said "Yeah, it would be a cool thing to do but let's wait until he retires hey?" I thought "Fair enough, that will be probably another couple of years then." And then a couple of weeks later he dropped that bombshell at Le Mans. Colin called me and said "We need to talk

about that book!" After the Phillip Island GP I went up and spent four days with Colin and Bronwyn at their house near Tamworth, NSW, and got as much information I could from them about his early years, the move to the UK and how it all happened. Colin also gave me contacts for key people that helped them out over the years, such as Terry Paviel, who gave Casey his first run on a road bike, and Ian Newton, who runs the Aprilia Superteen challenge in the UK. Then I went home, set out the structure of the book as I saw it and started interviewing all these people, building the story as I went along. In February 2013 I went out to Casey's place on the Gold Coast and spent two weeks with him and Adri, got his version of everything I had so far and built the text from there. I only had six weeks after that to complete the book and it was a lot of work. When Casey first read it he wasn't happy with the style, which he felt sounded more like me talking than him, so we worked on that with the help of a few other people and finally got it over the line.

What were the most rewarding and frustrating parts of this project for you?

I only ever wanted to do Casey justice and tell his story as he wanted it to be told. I think we managed that and seeing him smiling when we launched the book at a dinner for one of his old sponsors at Phillip Island meant a lot to me. I wouldn't say there was anything frustrating about it but it was hard to hear that he didn't like the first draft when I had put so much time and effort in. That was a big blow, but on reflection it was only natural. I had invested so much time into constructing the story and researching the facts that some things got overlooked, principally the style. We were on opposite sides of the world for the majority of the project and that didn't make it any easier.

FEATURE



Do you think some of the book is a tempered view of what Casey really thinks? Do you think he exercised restraint in some cases?

Yes of course, I think everybody exercises a certain level of restraint when they broadcast their opinion, but Casey is never anything but honest. Maybe there's another book to be written one day, if he feels like it...

Do you see and understand his perspective on MotoGP? The demands and the landscape?

I can see his perspective but I don't necessarily share it because I come from a completely different background and my role within the sport has always been opposite to Casey's. My job is based wholly around promoting the image of the sport, about bringing out the different characters, speculating on their relationships and delivering the news and gossip... things Casey not only doesn't give a shit about but actively thinks are pointless and irrelevant! Usually with Casey it's better to let him voice his opinion and keep yours to yourself!

Stoner left, Marquez entered but is MotoGP still poorer for his absence do you think?

Without a doubt, I don't think anybody could argue otherwise. The guy was the most talented racer of his generation and he retired at the top of his game, it's a travesty for the sport.

Why do you think such a clearly talented racer came in for criticism?

A lot of the time because his character was misunderstood. He was a winner, pure and simple, and nothing was ever good enough for him. People interpreted this as him constantly moaning but it was important to him to keep striving to improve, to never be satisfied even if he won a race. That was how he motivated himself and how he became so successful. I also think that until Ducati there was nobody willing to accept what they were looking at: a phenomenal talent that would only crash for as long as he didn't have the tools to win.

Honestly, is this really the end for Stoner and top level motorcycle racing?

At the moment he is convinced of it, he's not playing games. But who knows? A guy is allowed to change his mind isn't he?

CASEY STONER 'PUSHING THE LIMITS'



PLAY



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ALL CHANGE...

By Matthew Roberts



The teams and riders head out to Malaysia this week as the 2014 MotoGP pre-season fires into life with the first of two official tests at Sepang. As always there are plenty of exciting changes to the line-up but the biggest one from my perspective is that I won't be there!! It was really exciting for me to announce this week that after 13 years working in the MotoGP World Championship and an unbroken run working at 223 straight Grands Prix I will be making the switch to the British Superbike paddock this season, presenting the series along with World Superbikes on British Eurosport.

As most people will already know the BBC actually lost the rights to MotoGP for 2014 onwards and the championship will now be shown by BT Sport, so essentially I was out of a job anyway! Of course I spoke to BT about their plans but I decided early last year, when I knew the BBC contract would not be renewed, that I didn't want to travel to the races any more. It is something I had been thinking for a couple of years and after being on the road for my whole professional life, this seemed the right opportunity to make the break. I discussed a studio role with BT but it didn't go much further than that and as soon as Eurosport approached us I was really interested in what they had to offer. There aren't many sports in the world with the adrenaline and drama of motorcycle racing and it is such a privilege to be a part of that show, so I am delighted I get to continue doing the job I really love but without the stress and the time constraints of constant international travel.

So this season in OTOR I will be staying abreast of MotoGP but also bringing you news and blogs from 'planet Superbikes', where the racing is as close and exciting as anything you will

see in the rest of the motorsport universe. As a fan I have followed both championships closely over the last few years and the racing in both has been brilliant to watch. I know a lot of the top riders in WSB from MotoGP and am good friends with guys like Chaz Davies and Eugene Laverty. Hopefully they can both be challenging Tom Sykes for the title this year, as well as Alex Lowes, although you have to say Tom starts as a strong favourite because he's on the same bike again and his form last year was so strong. Alex is a great talent who should hopefully follow his brother Sam into the GP paddock in the near future and I'm really looking forward to seeing what he can do on the Suzuki.

In BSB the championship is a bit more open and anything can happen in the six-race end-of-season shootout, which is the beauty of it, but clearly Shane Byrne is the man to beat. He has won the title three times already and he's back on the Kawasaki that he rode to the runner-up spot last year, when he narrowly missed out to Lowes in the final round. It's going to be really interesting to see what level John Hopkins comes back at after a year out and how Josh Brookes gets on with the Yamaha, and with guys like James Ellison, Jakub Smrz and Ryuichi Kiyonari also in the mix the racing should be as tough and exciting as ever. I'm also really excited to see how American youngster James Rispoli gets on in the British Supersport series, which is being shown live for the first time by British Eurosport.

The best news for American fans is that you can watch Rispoli - and all the British Superbike and Supersport races - in the USA on the Discovery Velocity channel. See you soon!



By Roland Brown, photos by Double Red/Serra



**KAWASAKI GET EDGY AND
ANGULAR FOR THE Z1000.
DOES THE MAKEOVER WORK?
ROLAND BROWN CASTS A VERDICT...**

Kawasaki's development team must have had mixed emotions when they finalised work on the updated Z1000 and discovered what rival manufacturers had been doing. They'd given their naked 'four' a dramatic restyle plus a revamped chassis with uprated forks and front brake. They'd tuned the 1043cc four-cylinder engine with an extra 4bhp that took maximum output to a very respectable 140bhp.

They were doubtless proud of their work, and rightly so. But then the news emerged that Aprilia's super-naked class yardstick the Tuono V4R had been updated with a 170bhp V4 motor and ABS. That KTM's 1290 Super Duke R was on the way with its 180bhp V-twin lump and sophisticated electronics. And that BMW's new S1000R combined 160bhp output with a long list of features and an improbably low price.

The super-naked stakes have been substantially raised in the last year, leaving those Z1000 engineers looking a bit like a bloke who's brought a new knife to a fight — and found the rival gang tooled-up with guns. Still, at least that Kawasaki blade is a big, shiny and sharp one. The Z1000 might not match the European opposition for power, light weight or electronics but - in its favour - it's below them on price too. And you could argue that 140bhp is more than enough when you don't have a fairing to hide behind.



KAWASAKI Z1000 TEST





KAWASAKI Z1000 TEST

The Z1000 could not be easily mistaken for a machine from another manufacturer. Its aggressive new shape, incorporating low-set headlight with its four LED lenses, is designed with much Kawasaki talk about the Japanese word “sugomi”, to do with emitting an aura of power. The dohc, 16-valve engine gets revised cam timing, longer intake trumpets, redesigned airbox and a new engine management system. The result is a slight increase throughout the range, with that new maximum of 140bhp arriving at 10,000rpm.

Chassis updates are mainly aimed at making the bike feel sportier. Front suspension is Showa's Big Piston Forks, as used by several other bikes including Kawasaki's own Ninja ZX-6R. The rear suspension's damping is stiffer and the linkage is revised to reduce wheel travel. The other main change is to the front brake, where bigger, 310mm petal discs are gripped by Tokico Monobloc calipers.

There are also changes to the ergonomics, starting with a one-piece handlebar that is slightly lower than the old one, giving a subtly more leant-forward riding position. The new, digital instrument panel is small, set very low and incorporates two digital rev-counters, one for up to 4000rpm and another that takes over above that figure. You don't need to look down at them very often, such is the Z1000 engine's flexible power delivery.



“The Z1000 has heaps to offer as a fairly simple yet powerful bike with a big helping of style and attitude...”



PLAY

KAWASAKI Z1000 TEST





There's enough torque to pull reasonably crisply from as low as 2000rpm even in top gear. Midrange acceleration is superbly strong, with the slightly louder induction note adding to the entertainment. Cruising at the legal limit or higher is effortless, for the bike if not for the rider's neck. There's no ride-by-wire or choice of riding modes, and I didn't miss them although the lack of traction control is slightly surprising. Top speed is about 150mph and in some ways it's one of the Kawasaki's strengths that due to the lack of wind protection it feels mighty fast long before reaching that figure.

Handling is very good, without quite matching the flickable feel of lighter super-naked rivals. At high speed the handlebars felt slightly vague, though never remotely worrying. The rest of the time the bike was impeccably stable, requiring a reasonable amount of effort to get it to turn quickly, but inspiring plenty of confidence in bends.

Ride quality is reasonable, though the combination of firmer forks and reduced rear-end travel gives a slightly sportier feel that can become harsh on a bumpy road. The firmer

front end keeps the Kawasaki well balanced even when its new Tokico Monobloc calipers are providing plenty of stopping power with minimal lever effort, backed up by an efficient ABS system.

As an everyday bike the Z1000 is respectably practical. The large and widely spaced mirrors work well; the petrol tank is enlarged by a couple of litres to a capacity of 17. That should be good for 130 miles or more between stops; enough for most. The instrument panel now includes fuel consumption and remaining range info, but you still have to take a hand off the bars and press a button on the dash to toggle through the info.

Still, for relatively short trips, especially in fine weather, the Z1000 has heaps to offer as a fairly simple yet powerful bike with sound handling, excellent brakes and a big helping of style and attitude. It might not quite match the performance and sophistication of the top European super-naked. But it's quick, entertaining and the best of the Japanese challengers in this increasingly competitive class.



LEATT

Rather than inundating young kids with mountains of protection Leatt have sought a solution and their Fusion 2.0 is the latest version of a neck and body armour combo that ticks two boxes in one hit. In the PR text it states: 'The Fusion vest 2.0 Junior's CE certified neck and CE certified body protection addresses the fact that young riders are very susceptible to chest, flank, shoulder, back and neck injuries.'

The award-winning brace is fused with the impact absorbing, 3DF foam technology that previously made Leatt's chest protectors a real asset. Another handy element is the side entry wraparound velcro. This design means there is no gap in the front protective plate. It is lightweight and easy to fit thanks to the Velcro fasteners. There are two junior sizes: S/M 105-125cm tall (3ft 5" – 4ft 1"), L/XL 125-150cm tall (4ft 1" – 4ft 11").

Keep an eye on the protective garments from Leatt. Their neck braces are now industry standard and renowned but their investigation and research into other products means that their output is widening significantly and the stuff is good quality.

www.leatt.com









ALPINESTARS

One item from the Alpinestars cannon that we've been using regularly over the last month or two is the Tech Neck Warmer. When a scarf would get in the way and any other kind of 'buff' is too bulky then this slim garment is ideal.

The air holes in the mouth section mean that it can be positioned right over the bottom half of the face (if you forget the Hannibal Lecter resemblance) and it is thin enough not to crumple too much when you slide a crash helmet over your head. If we have one criticism then the base of the 'warmer' needs to be a bit wider. It will be clamped down sufficiently under a pair of leathers but can ruffle up when wearing a jacket for just casually riding around town.

Still, a well-thought piece of kit (at 18 euros) from Alpinestars that easily lives inside your lid when off the bike.

www.alpinestars.com



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Monster Energy Girls
By Ray Archer







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'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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